INITIAL STUDY / NOTICE OF PREPARATION

### NOTICE OF PREPARATION

From:	City of La Cañada Flintridge
	<b>Community Development Department</b>
	1327 Foothill Boulevard
	La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011-2137
	From:

#### Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

The city of La Cañada Flintridge will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study is attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but **not later than 30 days** after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Fred Buss at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Project Title: Tentative Tract Map 53647

**Project Location:** West/Northwest of Saint Katherine Drive between Haverstock Road and Palmerstone Drive in the city of La Cañada Flintridge, CA. The city of La Cañada Flintridge is located in Los Angeles County.

**Project Description:** Division of 47.11 acres of land into eighteen (18) lots ranging in size from 0.92 acres up to 18.36 acres.

Project Applicant: Kudrave Arc	chitects
Date: <u>July 2, 2002</u>	_ Signature:
	Title: Senior Planner
	Telephone: (818) 790-8881

 $Reference: California\ Code\ of\ Regulations,\ Title\ 14,\ (CEQA\ Guidelines)\ Sections\ 15082 (a),\ 15103,\ 15375.$ 

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Potentially Potentially Less than No
Significant Significant Significant Impact

Impact Unless Impact

Mitigation
Incorporated

## CITY OF LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

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policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			
	V		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or	X		
other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional			
plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of			
Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected			X
wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act			
(including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.)			
through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or			
other means?			
	37		
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native	X		
resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established			
native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the			
use of native wildlife nursery sites?			
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting	X		
biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or			
ordinance?			
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat			X
, 1			A
Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or			
other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation			
plan?			
			-

The initial study information submitted by the applicant indicated that sensitive, threatened, or endangered species are found on the site – both flora and fauna. In addition, the site potentially contains habitat for additional sensitive, threatened, or endangered species – California gnatcatcher. A Section 7 consultation with the California Department of Fish & Game may be required to establish the appropriate mitigation if a "taking" is established. The presence of oak woodlands, one of the city's protected tree species, is also of potential concern relative to the development of the site.

4. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the proposal:			
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Guidelines Section 15064.5?	X		
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Guidelines Section 15064.5?	X		
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X		
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	X		

This site is rugged and fairly undisturbed. There have not been any studies of this area according to the records check submitted by the applicant. The site should be investigated for any potential historical, paleological or archaeological resources.

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5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project: a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the X most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? X iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? X iv) Landslides? b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? X c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that X would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of X the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of X

The site contains some areas that are shown on the State of California Seismic Hazard Zones map (March 25, 1999 - latest) as having the potential for earthquake-induced landslides. The average slope of the site is about 48%. Grading for roads and building pads will require substantial movement of dirt and the development of drainage infrastructure in the potential landslide areas. Although no known earthquake faults run through the site, such faults are within a few miles of the project. As proposed, most of the site will be served by the sewer district from Pasadena. However some lots are proposed to be served by on-site septic systems. There has been no investigation as to whether there are expansive soils on the site. These issues need to be addressed in greater detail.

septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where

sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

6. HAZARDS and HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the proposal involve:	
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment	X
through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous	
materials?	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment	X
through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions	
involving the release of hazardous materials into the	
environment?	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely	X
hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter	

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mile of an existing or proposed school?		
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous		X
materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section		
65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to		
the public or the environment?		
e) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an		X
adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation		
plan?		
f) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury	X	
or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are		
adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed		
with wildlands?		

This is a residential area isolated from major thoroughfares. There is no expectation that hazardous materials would be transported through the area. However, the site is in an area that is covered with thick underbrush, trees, and other vegetation. The Chaparral-Coastal Sage Scrub mix has a propensity to burn easily. The placement of new homes in this area creates a significant potential for new ignition sources, and places people and structures in a potentially dangerous situation if appropriate mitigation is not incorporated.

7. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the proposa	ıl result ir	1:	
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?		X	
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	X		
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	X		
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?		X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped			 X

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on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate	
Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which	X
would impede or redirect flood flows?	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury	X
or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the	
failure of a levee or dam?	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	X

The average slope of the site is approximately 48%. Storm water drainage has the potential to cause significant impact to the site and surrounding properties. The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System will require substantial improvements to the site to accommodate development. Grading required for the streets and building pads will require drainage systems that do not yet exist. A blue-line stream as represented on the USGS Quadrangle map is delineated on the site. Issues related to where the drainage will go and what the additive impact to existing tributaries (including the blue-line stream) will be is unknown at this time. Depending upon the extent of grading and improvements, a Section 404 permit for the blue-line stream may be required from the Army Corps of Engineers.

8. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the proposal:		
a) Physically divide an established community?		X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or	X	
regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project		
(including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan,		
local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the		
purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?		

The project may exceed the density allowed for the slope of the property. The size of the lots are a function of slope and land area. Policies contained within the city's hillside development ordinance may require adjustment to the number and placement of lots within the site. This may also bear on road improvements within the site. Alternative densities and lot (tract) design should be explored.

9. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the proposal:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource				X
that would be of value to the region and the residents of the				
state?				
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important				X
mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general				
plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				
The initial sails study the General Plan and the Aggregate Reso	irces Mar	s for Lo	c Angalac	

The initial soils study, the General Plan, and the Aggregate Resources Maps for Los Angeles County indicate that there are no locally-important mineral resources within the bounds of the site.

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10. NOISE. Would the proposal result in:		
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess	X	
of standards established in the local general plan or noise		
ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?		
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground	X	
borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?		
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in	X	
the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?		
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise	X	
levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the		
project?		
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where		X
such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public		
airport or public use airport, would the project expose people		
residing or working in the project area to excessive noise		
levels?		
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would		X
the project expose people residing or working in the project		
area to excessive noise levels?		
Short term noise will occur from the development of the roads infi	rastructure and oth	er

Short term noise will occur from the development of the roads, infrastructure and other improvements that will be required prior to approval of a Final Map. Later construction of individual houses on the pads will likely not create significant noise impacts if development occurs sporadically over time (custom home development).

11. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the proposal:			
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either	X		
directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses)			
or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other			
infrastructure)?			
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing,			X
necessitating the construction of replacement housing			
elsewhere?			
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the			X
construction of replacement housing elsewhere?			

The proposal is intended to induce a substantial amount of housing into a 47 acre area that is currently vacant. New roads and standard infrastructure will be also be required to be developed to support the housing. Because the site is vacant, there will be no displacement of people or housing.

12. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant

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environmental impacts, in order to maintain accepta performance objectives for any of the public services	· •	e times or other
a) Fire protection?	X	
b) Police protection?	X	
c) Schools?	X	
d) Parks?		X
d) Other public facilities?		X

The location of the project will have an impact on response times for police and fire services. It will be difficult to determine the significance of the response times and level of service without further analysis.

13. RECREATION. Would the proposal:	
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood	X
and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that	
substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or	
be accelerated?	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the	X
construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might	
have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	

There are no anticipated impacts to recreational facilities. The relatively low density of the development is not likely to generate a significant impact on park facilities. Each lot will be large enough to contain private recreational facilities.

14. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the proposal result	in:		
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to	X		
the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e.,			
result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle			
trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at			
intersections)?			
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service		X	r L
standard established by the county congestion management			
agency for designated roads or highways?			
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an		X	r L
increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in			
substantial safety risks?			
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g.,	X		
sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses			
(e.g., farm equipment)?			
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X		
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?		X	r L
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting		X	_

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alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

The existing street system consists of local residential streets that in some cases are not built to city standards. Many of these roads were built more than fifty years ago. Their features include sharp turns, inadequate shoulders, inadequate safety railings, and inadequate paved width. The applicant proposes to improve roads on-site and tie into the existing connected road system. The increase in traffic through the addition of seventeen residential lots has the potential to further significantly increase the volume to capacity ratio of these roads and increase the potential for accidents. The road features affect the ability of emergency vehicles to serve the area with nominal response times, and for the safe evacuation of residents in combination with the response of safety services (fire, police and medical).

15. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:		
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable	X	
Regional Water Quality Control Board?		
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or	X	
wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing		
facilities, the construction of which could cause significant		
environmental effects?		
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water	X	
drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the		
construction of which could cause significant environmental		
effects?		
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project	X	
from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or		
expanded entitlements needed?		
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment	X	
provider which serves or may serve the project that it has		
adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in		
addition to the provider's existing commitments?		
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to		X
accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?		
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations		X
related to solid waste?		

Development of the site will require construction of significant new storm water drainage facilities, water lines, streets and sewer lines. Alignments for these items will be in steep slopes and in some cases, close to a blue-line stream. Some of lots on the site (lots 10, 11, 12 and 13) cannot be adequately served by the existing water system due to pressure zone issues. Additional study will be necessary to determine what facilities will be needed, where they will go, and what impact they may cause.

16. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.			
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of	X		

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the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or				
wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop				
below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or				
animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a				
rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important				
examples of the major periods of California history or				
prehistory?				
An initial study has determined that threatened or sensitive specie	s do exist	on the s	ite. The	
extent of impact to these species needs to be determined, as well a	as the exte	ent of mi	tigation	
necessary.				
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited,				X
but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable"				
means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable				
when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the				
effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable				
future projects)?				
Other projects in the area consist of development of two single ho	uses, eac	h to be b	uilt on the	eir
individual lots. There may also be some potential for other existing vacant lots in the area to be				be
built. There is no potential for development of another tract map in the area because there are no				e no
remaining vacant parcels of sufficient size. The project does not rise to the level of				
"cumulatively considerable."				
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause	X			
substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or				
indirectly?				
The issues of fire safety, access, and drainage are likely to cause substantial impacts on the				
existing residents of the area unless appropriately mitigated.				

## **Source List**

The following enumerated documents are available for review at the offices of the City of La Cañada Flintridge, Community Development Department, 1327 Foothill Boulevard, La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011-2137.

- 1. City of La Canada Flintridge Environmental Impact Report for the General Plan Land Use and Housing Elements
- 2. City of La Canada Flintridge General Plan
- 3. Biological Assessment, Parker & Johnson Property, VHBC, Incorporated (September 28, 2001)
- 4. Geologic and Soils Engineering Exploration, Proposed 17 Lot Subdivision, The J. Byer Group, Inc. (September 24, 2001)
- 5. A Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation of the Parker and Johnson Property, McKenna et al (September 14, 2001)
- 6. Tree Report, L. Newman Design Group, Inc. (October 2, 2001)

#### DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project Title**: Tentative Tract Map 53647

2. Lead Agency Name and Address: City of La Cañada Flintridge

1327 Foothill Boulevard

La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number**: Fred Buss - (818) 790-8881

- 4. **Project Location**: West/Northwest of Saint Katherine Drive between Haverstock Road and Palmerstone Drive, La Cañada Flintridge, CA
- 5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address**: Kudrave Architects

811 West 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Penthouse Los Angeles, CA 90017

- 6. **General Plan Designation**: Estate Residential (one dwelling unit/acre minimum)
- 7. **Zoning**: R-1-40,000 (Single Family Residential 40,000 Sq. Ft. Min. Lot Area)
- 8. **Description of Project**: The applicant requests permission to divide 47.11 acres of land lying in hillside area (average slope 48%) into eighteen (18) lots ranging in size from 0.92 acres up to 18.36 acres. The site would generally be served by surrounding existing streets; however, extensions and improvements of those streets would be required to serve all proposed lots. The topography of the site is extremely hilly requiring substantial grading to construct the street extensions and building pads. Later construction of the houses on each individual building pad would require a (discretionary) Hillside

Development Permit which may also require additional site-specific environmental review.

### **PROJECT LOCATION**

The project is located in the southern portion of the City of La Canada Flintridge, which is located in the middle of Los Angeles County. The site is the vacant area bounded by Inverness Drive/Haverstock Road to the north, Saint Katherine Drive to the east, Palmerstone Drive to the south, and properties off Monarch Drive to the west.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING**

The project consists of 47.11 acres of untouched and vacant Chaparral – Coastal Sage Scrub mix, oak



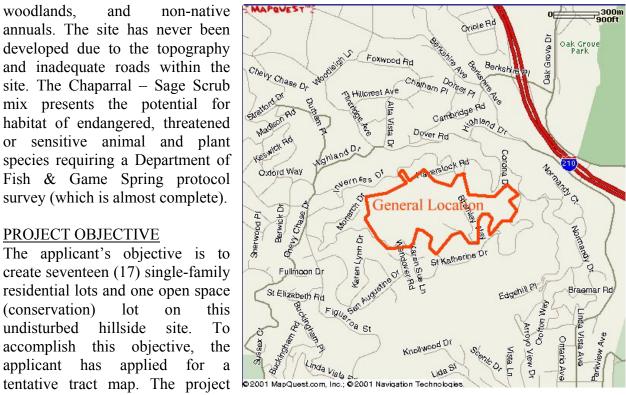
La Cañada Flintridge

LOCATION MAP

woodlands. and non-native annuals. The site has never been developed due to the topography and inadequate roads within the site. The Chaparral - Sage Scrub mix presents the potential for habitat of endangered, threatened or sensitive animal and plant species requiring a Department of Fish & Game Spring protocol survey (which is almost complete).

#### PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The applicant's objective is to create seventeen (17) single-family residential lots and one open space (conservation) lot this hillside undisturbed site To accomplish this objective, the applicant has applied for



will require the creation of additional public streets, and potentially extensive grading, to accommodate useable building pads and modified street sections. Other infrastructure needed will include a stormwater drainage system, utilities (gas, water, electric, phone and cable), sewer lines, and water lines (drinking and fire). The open space lot is intended to remain in its natural state to be cared for by a Home Owners' Association that would be formed as part of the tract. The applicant has also suggested that the open space lot could be donated to a non-profit agency, or it could be used as a habitat conservation area as a tradeoff for development on the remainder of the site (depending upon the results of the EIR). It could also be used as a passive public park if the city were to acquire it.

Development of the project site would include future construction of single family residences if, and after, the tract map is approved. The individual lots would be intended to be sold to separate individuals for custom home development. These future homes would each require a separate Hillside Development Permit since each lot would likely exceed an average slope of fifteen percent (15%). Hillside Development Permits are discretionary and each requires an additional public hearing. The developed tract would eventually look similar to the surrounding development.

#### SURROUNDING LAND USES

Current Development:	Vacant
To the north:	Single Family Residential
To the east:	Single Family Residential
To the south:	Single Family Residential
To the west:	Single Family Residential

- 9. **Other Agencies Whose Approval is Required** (and Permits Needed): Valley Water Company, Pasadena City Sewers, Los Angeles County Flood Control, State Department of Fish & Game, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board (Construction Activity Permit)
- 10. **Environmental Factor(s) Potentially Affected** (The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated," as indicated by the checklist on the following pages):

X Land Use and Planning X Transportation/Traffic X Public Services X Population and Housing X Biological Resources X Utilities & Service Systems \_ Mineral Resources X Geology & Soils X Aesthetics X Hydrology & Water Quality X Cultural Resources Hazards X Air Quality \_ Recreation X Noise X Mandatory Findings of Significance



# 11. **Determination**: On the basis of this initial evaluation (check appropriate box):

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment,	
and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the	
environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the	
project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED	
NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.	
I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an	X
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.	
I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or	
"potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect	
1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal	
standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis	
as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required,	
but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.	
I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the	
environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately	
in an earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION	
pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that	
earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION,	
including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project,	
nothing further is required.	
	_
Signature Date	
<u>Frederick W. Buss</u> for the City of La Cañada Flintridge	
Printed Name	